Santa Fe River
Ewel Farm
1/27/2022

Project Score	
7.67 of 10.00	
Inspection Date	
1/14/2022	
Size (ACPA)	
162.34 acres	
Parcel Number	**Acreage (ACPA)**
02731-000-000	102.34
02734-000-000	40
02735-002-001	20

Buildings	
4 ACPA, 4 onsite (house, garage, 2 barns)	
Just Value	**Just Value Per Acre**
$220,890	$430
Total Value (Just, Misc, Bldg)	**Total Value Per Acre**
$334,304	$651.00
Acquisition Type	
Conservation Easement	
Natural Community	**Condition**
Major River	Excellent
Floodplain Forest	Excellent
Floodplain Swamp	Excellent
Slope Forest	Excellent
Sandhill	Good-Fair
Upland Mixed Forest	Good
River Floodplain Lake	Good
Sinkhole	Good

Section-Township-Range	Other
31-06-18	Pine plantation
	Pecan grove
	Low Impact Development
Archaeological Sites	**Bald Eagle Nests**
1 recorded on site, 16 in 1 mile	0 on site, 0 within 1 mile

REPA Score	8.96 of 9.44 (Santa Fe River ACF Project Area)
KBN Rank:	1st out of 47 projects (Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem)
Outstanding FL Waterway:	Santa Fe River frontage, approximately 1 mile

OVERALL DESCRIPTION:

The Ewel Farm property includes three parcels, totaling 162 acres (ACPA) in size, located in northwestern Alachua County, adjacent to the Santa Fe River. The western boundary of the property is adjacent to O'Leno State Park, and the property on the north side of the river is protected through the Bonnet Lake Conservation Easement (SRWMD). The property falls with the Alachua County Forever Santa Fe River Project Area, which is the highest priority project area for the ACF program, and the Santa Fe River Strategic Ecosystem, which is the highest ranked strategic ecosystem for protection. The Ewel Farm property has just over one mile of Santa Fe River frontage and contains a mosaic of high quality forested natural communities. The property transitions from xeric sandhill natural community in the south to wetland floodplain swamp along the Santa Fe River in the north. The property owners have undertaken significant restoration efforts in the sandhill which have resulted in high degree of groundcover plant diversity, with additional ongoing restoration efforts planned for the future. The property has been nominated by the landowners as a conservation easement.

With the Santa Fe River forming the northern property boundary, preservation of the site would protect just over one mile of the Santa Fe River corridor as well as its associated forested wetlands. In addition, a seasonal stream originating from wetlands to the southeast, flows to the north through the property where it then joins the Santa Fe River. Preservation of the property would enhance water quality of this stream before it enters the Santa Fe River.

The forested wetlands in proximity to the Santa Fe River are in excellent condition. A large bluff-like river levee occurs along eastern side of the property's river frontage, and supports species such as native azalea, highbush blueberry, parsley haw, sebastian bush, live oak, and bluestem palmetto. Moving west along the river, the natural river levees and sloughs occur in parallel to the main river channel but diminish in elevation. This reduced elevation supports floodplain swamp in low lying areas adjacent to the river and in intermittent slough channels and old oxbows. Cypress, maple and tupelo are common in these areas and there is little groundcover, in part due to intermittent flooding. Moving slightly south from the river channel, and on the tops of the river levees, the floodplain grades to a more typical floodplain forest natural community with species that include tupelo, blue beech, diamond leaf oak, sweet bay, swamp chestnut oak, southern magnolia, and palmetto. Water locust and river birch occur in the floodplain forest associated with the seasonal stream channel. Cypress and pine were logged from the floodplain in the early 1900s, leaving evidence in the form of huge cypress stumps and a few abandoned cants that the landowners have documented.

Interstate 75 divides the 4.5-acre western portion of the property, which is adjacent to O'Leno State Park, from the 158 acres to the east. A unique feature associated with the floodplain near I-75 is the embayment of the river, called Cason's Lake by area residents, a natural feature of a former oxbow on the river. The river was channelized during construction of Interstate 75 in the early 1960s, diverting flow north of the oxbow, but the river is still accessible from Cason's Lake, especially during high water periods.

Moving further south, and with increasing elevation away from the river, the forest transitions to upland mixed forest on the east side of the property, and more dramatically to slope forest on the west side of the property, including a 30 foot high bluff above the floodplain. The upland mixed forest contains a good diversity and structure including an overstory of hardwood trees (live oak, laurel oak, sweetgum, red maple, water oak, pignut hickory and mockernut hickory), loblolly pine and a midstory including sparkleberry, and American holly. Shrubs form the dominant groundcover that includes saw palmetto, Sebastian bush, highbush blueberry, and regenerating oaks. In the slope forest, mature magnolia, loblolly pine, basswood, red oak, dogwood, spruce pine, swamp chestnut oak form the overstory, while the groundcover is primarily open.

The landowners have been implementing restoration activities on the upland pine areas of the property for the past several years, becoming more focused on sandhill groundcover restoration over the past 2 years. Restoration efforts have included: use of prescribed fire, removal of off-site pine species, restoration of longleaf pine, and establishment of native groundcover from regional sources through direct seeding with intensive site preparation. While many of the upland areas have undergone historic agricultural uses, sandhill groundcover has been restored and recovered to a remarkable level. Upland oaks, including turkey oak and sand live oak are also scattered throughout the site, but they are mostly restricted to the midstory and understory due to the burn history of the site and additional mechanical treatment undertaken by the landowners. Due to the landowners' restoration efforts,

the understory is co-dominated by wiregrass, but also contains a variety of other grasses and forbs typical of healthy sandhill groundcover. Some species of interest that are present include lopsided indian grass, multiple species each of *Andropogon*, *Aristida*, *Eragrostis*, *Liatris*, and others.

Numerous active gopher tortoise burrows were observed throughout the site. Southern fox squirrels, indigo snakes, pine snakes, northern bobwhite quail, deer, turkey, swallow-tailed kites, bluebirds, and many other wildlife species have been observed on site by the landowner. During the site visit, sixteen bird species were observed onsite. The landowners have documented fourteen species of snakes, and number mammals, amphibians, and invertebrates. The Florida endemic plant*, Dicerandra densiflora* has been identified within one of the sandhill restoration areas.

One cultural site has been documented on the property, an area of lithic scatter with evidence of Archaic (8,500-10,000 BCE) and Weeden Island (450-1000) cultures. In addition, the landowners have found an abundance of chert chips and pottery/pottery shards on the property.

An approximately 15-acre pecan grove occurs on the property, southeast of an approximately 2-acre clearing associated with the house, detached garage, and two pole barns. Non-native, invasive plant presence on the property is very low. Scattered instances of tropical soda apple and natal grass were observed, and pasture grass is present in one sandhill restoration area and the pecan grove. The landowners are actively removing and monitoring invasive plants on the property. The landowners are also actively monitoring for feral hogs and removing them when detected.

An easement exists on the property in a narrow strip adjacent to Interstate 75 to allow a nearby landowner access the Santa Fe River across this property for cattle watering purposes. This easement is currently not being utilized by the neighbor.

DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

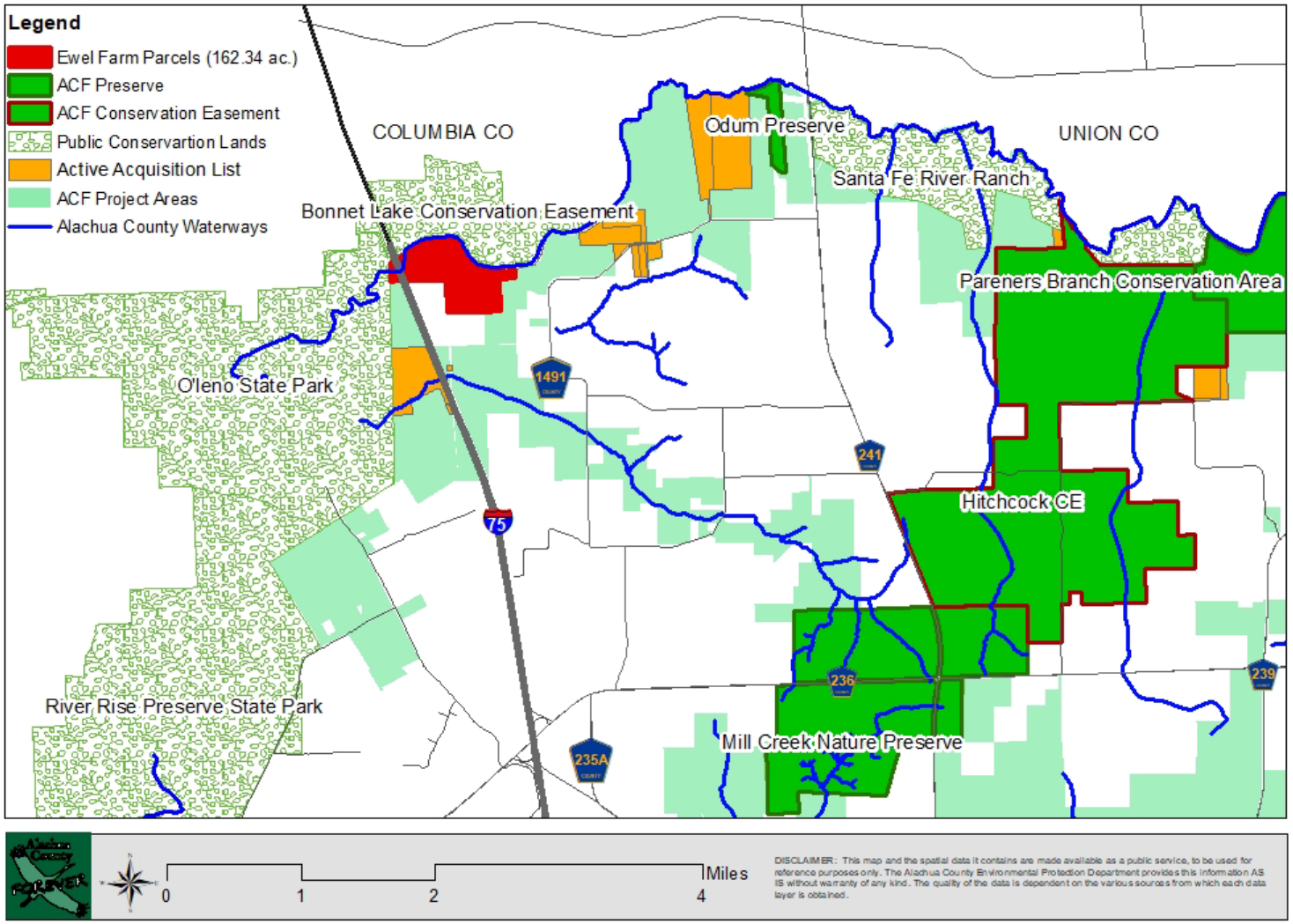
This development analysis is based on a limited desk-top review and is founded upon current County Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan policies. The Development Scenario is oversimplified and is meant only to convey a general sense of the potential of development intensity that could be possible based on land use and zoning conditions.

The parcels are zoned Agriculture (A) and have a Land Use designation of Rural/Agriculture. Based on the existing zoning, which allows for 1 unit per 5 acres, an estimated 32 residential units could be built. An additional eight units could be received if the development is clustered and 50% of the upland habitat within the Strategic Ecosystem is preserved; inclusive of the 75 ft. wetland buffers. Under this scenario, two bonus units and 1 unit per 10 acres of conservation set-aside can be granted (120 SE acres x 50% = 60 acres / 10 units per acre = 6 units + 2 bonus units = 8 units). Total Potential Units: 32 units + 8 SE/bonus units = 40 units. The concentration of the wetlands, wetland buffers and floodplain are within the northern portion of the property would not restrict the potential construction of this many residential units and associated infrastructure. However, the remote location from communities, limited availability of infrastructure, construction costs and lack of residential market conditions in this vicinity would limit the development potential for this subject site.

REPA - Santa Fe River - Ewel Farm - 1/27/22					
CATEGORY	Criterion	WEIGHTING	Enter Criteria Value Based on Site Inspection	Average Criteria Score	Average Criteria Score Multiplied by Relative Importance
(I-1) PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES	A. Whether the property has geologic/hydrologic conditions that would easily enable contamination of vulnerable aquifers that have value as drinking water sources;		4		
	B. Whether the property serves an important groundwater recharge function;		3		
	C. Whether the property contains or has direct connections to lakes, creeks, rivers, springs, sinkholes, or wetlands for which conservation of the property will protect or improve surface water quality;		3		
	D. Whether the property serves an important flood management function.		4		
(I-2) PROTECTION OF NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND LANDSCAPES	A. Whether the property contains a diversity of natural communities;		3		
	B. Whether the natural communities present on the property are rare;		5		
	C. Whether there is ecological quality in the communities present on the property;		3		
	D. Whether the property is functionally connected to other natural communities;		4		
	E. Whether the property is adjacent to properties that are in public ownership or have other environmental protections such as conservation easements;		4		
	F. Whether the property is large enough to contribute substantially to conservation efforts;		4		
	G. Whether the property contains important, Florida-specific geologic features such as caves or springs;		3		
	H. Whether the property is relatively free from internal fragmentation from roads, power lines, and other features that create barriers and edge effects.		4		
(I-3) PROTECTION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES	A. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species or species of special concern;		4		
	B. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for species with large home ranges;		4		
	C. Whether the property contains plants or animals that are endemic or near-endemic to Florida or Alachua County;		5		
	D. Whether the property serves as a special wildlife migration or aggregation site for activities such as breeding, roosting, colonial nesting, or over-wintering;		4		
	E. Whether the property offers high vegetation quality and species diversity;		4		
	F. Whether the property has low incidence of non-native invasive species.		4		
(I-4) SOCIAL AND HUMAN VALUES	A. Whether the property offers opportunities for compatible resource-based recreation, if appropriate;		2		
	B. Whether the property contributes to urban green space, provides a municipal defining greenbelt, provides scenic vistas, or has other value from an urban and regional planning perspective.		4		
	AVERAGE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN VALUES			3.75	
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE	1.333			5.00
(II-1) MANAGEMENT ISSUES	A. Whether it will be practical to manage the property to protect its environmental, social and other values (examples include controlled burning, exotics removal, maintaining hydro-period, and so on);		4		
	B. Whether this management can be completed in a cost-effective manner.		5		
(II-2) ECONOMIC AND ACQUISITION ISSUES	A. Whether there is potential for purchasing the property with matching funds from municipal, state, federal, or private contributions;		4		
	B. Whether the overall resource values justifies the potential cost of acquisition;		4		
	C. Whether there is imminent threat of losing the environmental, social or other values of the property through development and/or lack of sufficient legislative protections (this requires analysis of current land use, zoning, owner intent, location and		3		
	AVERAGE FOR ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT VALUES			4.00	
	RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THIS CRITERIA SET IN THE OVERALL SCORE	0.667			2.67
	TOTAL SCORE				**7.67**
NOTES					
	General Criteria Scoring Guidelines				
	1 = Least beneficial, 2 = Less Beneficial than Average, 3 = Average, 4 = More Beneficial than Average, 5 = Most Beneficial				

Santa Fe River - Ewel Farm
Location Map

MAP 1



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Santa Fe River - Ewel Farm Parcel Map

MAP 2